7:Crowder J-5 (1955-1958) 1959
MS37 Senegal MS37



was a borrower, only to have other people borrowing from him.

The morning after I had lunch with Diop I went to a Conference in the High Commission on Alcoholism. This, it appeared, was a grave problem in Dakar. The creation of the new Africa has its ugly sides, and this was perhaps one of its most ugly. A favourite drink, named after the local bus service, was the 'Car Rapide'. To make it you mix beer, methylated spirits and a drop of petrol. It is guaranteed to knock you out in one go. In Zuiginchor a more potent drink was made by adding a well-known Parisian perfume to beer.

A day before the Conference *Paris-Dakar*, the local daily newspaper, published an article on alcoholism in M'Backé, a large Senegalese town:

ALCOHOLISM MUST BE FOUGHT

An all out police attack is needed and would be appreciated to seek out and rid our town of a gang of drunks of both sexes who spend their time in the small shops and sordid bars which are hidden all over the town in the guise of restaurants and small eating places.

Most of the proprietors of these cafés add to their miserable occupations that of pimping. Favouring alcoholism, they nevertheless indulge in all revolting forms of debauchery.

In most parts of our town one finds these small cafés nicely divided, serving as homes and places of business.

A few posts in the ground, a roof of polished tiles, a wooden fence and there you have the ideal café.

The interior of these hovels is divided into small compartments with no ventilation and on the ground a few mattresses covered with dirty blankets. The decoration consists of a few old newspapers pasted here and there to keep out the sun. The bar stock lies among packing cases and hidden under the mattresses. In holes made for the purpose are bottles of wine, red, rosé and white, and beer.

To cover up this business known to be officially disliked, the café proprietors keep a kitchen where periodically they prepare meals, hygienically leaving a lot to be desired.

In these sordid places, the atmosphere heavy with noxious smells, they give themselves up to their anti-social pastimes. Debauchery has been given a home here. These are also the rendezvous of scoundrels and receivers of stolen goods.

7:Crowder J-5 (1955-1958) 1959
MS37 Senegal MS37
Wolof MS30



After the great Magal de Touba[1] our town inherited bands of homeless among whom were notorious criminals.

Alcoholism was not the only form of moral decadence in a city like Dakar. Actually crimes of violence, robbing and murder were almost unknown. There were rarely any reference to them in the papers, and a police officer assured me that this was true. However, one read frequently of crimes of passion, such as a man stabbing his friend to death in the course of a quarrel.

There was, I was told, an enormous amount of prostitution in Dakar. I was shown one of the city's more notorious brothels in Rebeusse suburb, a rambling shack that had been raided more than once by police. On the whole prostitution is not organized because of legal difficulties. A number of prostitutes were white women, who receive patronage mainly from Lebanese and Syrians. I was told of one who went around the Médina in a small car, serving the local population.

On the other hand homosexuality had a much freer rein, being prevalent amongst Africans, Mauretanians and Europeans alike. In Place Prôtet, the main square of Dakar, young African boys, more often than not Jollofs, could be seen waiting to be picked up. Under the Code Napoleon it is, of course, legal, and in theory presents no problem, though many people are worried by its spread in the city.

Of course, to many of these boys with no work, it is one way of making money. But amongst the Jollofs it seems to be more deeply rooted. Contact with Frenchmen in St. Louis, who often preferred black boys to black mistresses and contact with the Mauretanians may provide an explanation.

Today one can even see Jollof men dressed in women's clothes. I once met one in a small bar outside Dakar. He was obviously pathetically feminine. The Jollof must be used to this since they even have a word for them—Gor-Digen. The elders and faithful Muslims condemn men for this, but it is typical of African tolerance that they are left very much alone by the rest of the people.

One reason for the growing tendency of Jollof men to remain bachelors to an age much older than is usual in Africa, if not for their homosexuality, is the character of the Jollof women.

[1] Celebration of Birth of Prophet.